

EXHIBIT A

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Serial No.: 10/696,683
Filed: October 29, 2003
Group Art Unit: 1794
Examiner: Jennifer A. Chriss
Appellant: Gary L. Heiman
Title: ENHANCED SURFACE GEOMETRY SHEETING
Attorney Docket: STAN-31
Conf. No.: 5261

**DECLARATION OF RICHARD STEWART
PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. §1.132**

I, Richard Stewart, of 5189 Harvestdale Drive, Mason, OH 45040, make this declaration in support of the above-captioned application and declare as follows:

1. I am an employee of Standard Textile Company, Inc., ("Standard Textile"), the assignee of the present invention.
2. I am not being separately compensated for this Declaration.
3. I am familiar with the prosecution of the above-referenced matter.
4. I have worked in the textile industry for the past 25 years, having spent all of that time in various positions with Standard Textile. I began my career with Standard Textile in January 1986 where I was assigned responsibility for sales of textile products, such responsibility requiring a comprehensive understanding of fabric formation and fabrication methods. I served in this role until October 1994. Since then, I have had numerous roles and responsibilities in product management and research and development, specifically including bed sheeting and fabric manufacture, testing, and design. Over the last nine years, I have been Vice President of Product Management. As Vice President of Product Management, one of my

primary personal responsibilities is to manage the product development process and new product development initiatives of Standard Textile. My activities commonly include evaluation and understanding of industry advancements and innovations relative to the production and fabrication of textile products including flat goods, terry cloth, incontinence and surgical fabrics, and apparel.

5. During my career, I also have been awarded the distinction of being named as *Allied Tradesman of The Year* by the Alabama Chapter of the National Association of Institutional Linen Management, and have since 1996 served as member of the Healthcare Committee of the Textile Rental Service Association. I am regarded as an expert on textile products and industry trends and have been cited as such by well-known industry trade publications such as *Hospital Purchasing News*, *Hotel/Motel Management*, *Green Lodging News*, *Lodging Magazine*, *AATCC Magazine*, *Textile World*, and *Biomedical Instrumentation & Technology*.

6. I earned a B.S.B.A. from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. In addition, I have also completed various post-baccalaureate studies in textile products and technologies at North Carolina State University, Clemson University, and The University of North Carolina.

7. I am listed as an inventor on several U.S. and foreign patent applications involving textiles, several of which are directed to bedding products such as bed sheeting. As an example, I am listed as an inventor on U.S. Patent Nos. 6,374,828 and 7,240,383 and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2009/0193584, as well as others. As part of my duties to Standard Textile, I have also been closely involved with prosecution of many other patent applications on behalf of my employer.

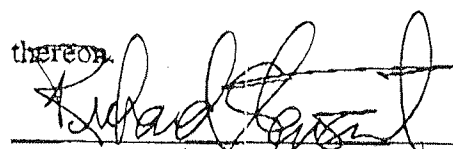
8. I thus have extensive experience with, and knowledge about, woven fabric sheeting and the requirements for such products and submit that I am skilled in the art to which the invention pertains and believe that I am qualified to address issues regarding woven sheeting, including the construction thereof.

9. A woven fabric sheeting having a twill weave, e.g., a 2x1 pattern, is not as strong a fabric when compared to a woven fabric having a conventional 1x1 plain weave pattern, as is disclosed in Heiman U.S. Patent No. 5,495,874 ("Heiman"). The additional float patterns introduced into the fabric, via the twill weave, lessen the strength of the woven fabric. And if faced with maintaining the strength of the woven fabric, I would not look to replace a 1x1 plain weave with a weaker 2x1 twill weave.

10. A woven fabric sheeting having a twill weave, e.g., a 2x1 pattern, is more expensive to produce and, consequently, sell, as compared to a woven fabric having a 1x1 plain weave, because of the additional patterning involved with providing the twill weave.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the above-

thereon.


Richard Stewart

5/14/2010
Date